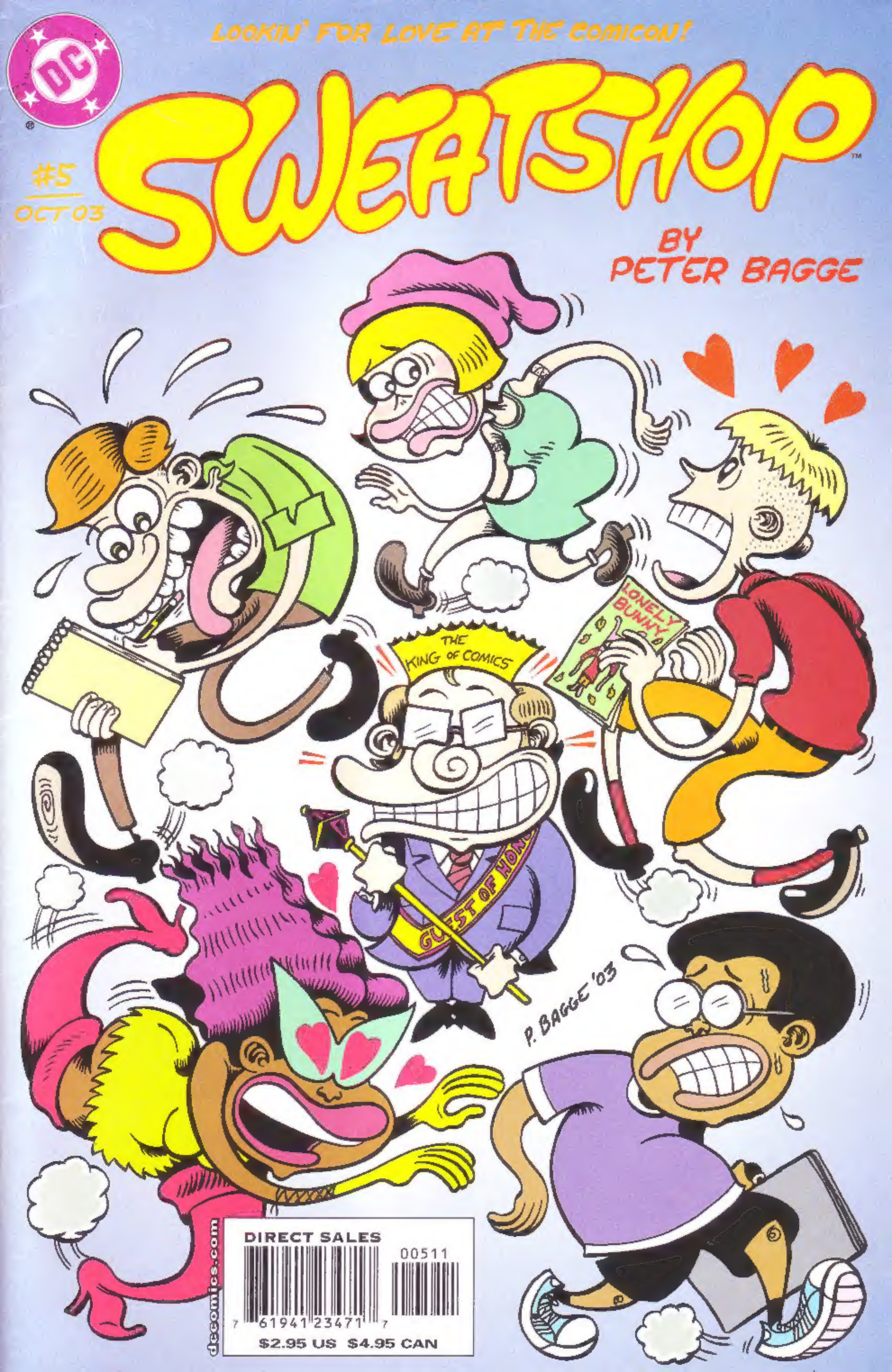
DC
LOOKIN' FOR LOVE AT THE COMICON!
SWEATSHOP™
#5
OCT 03
BY PETER BAGGE
THE KING OF COMICS
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GUEST OF HON
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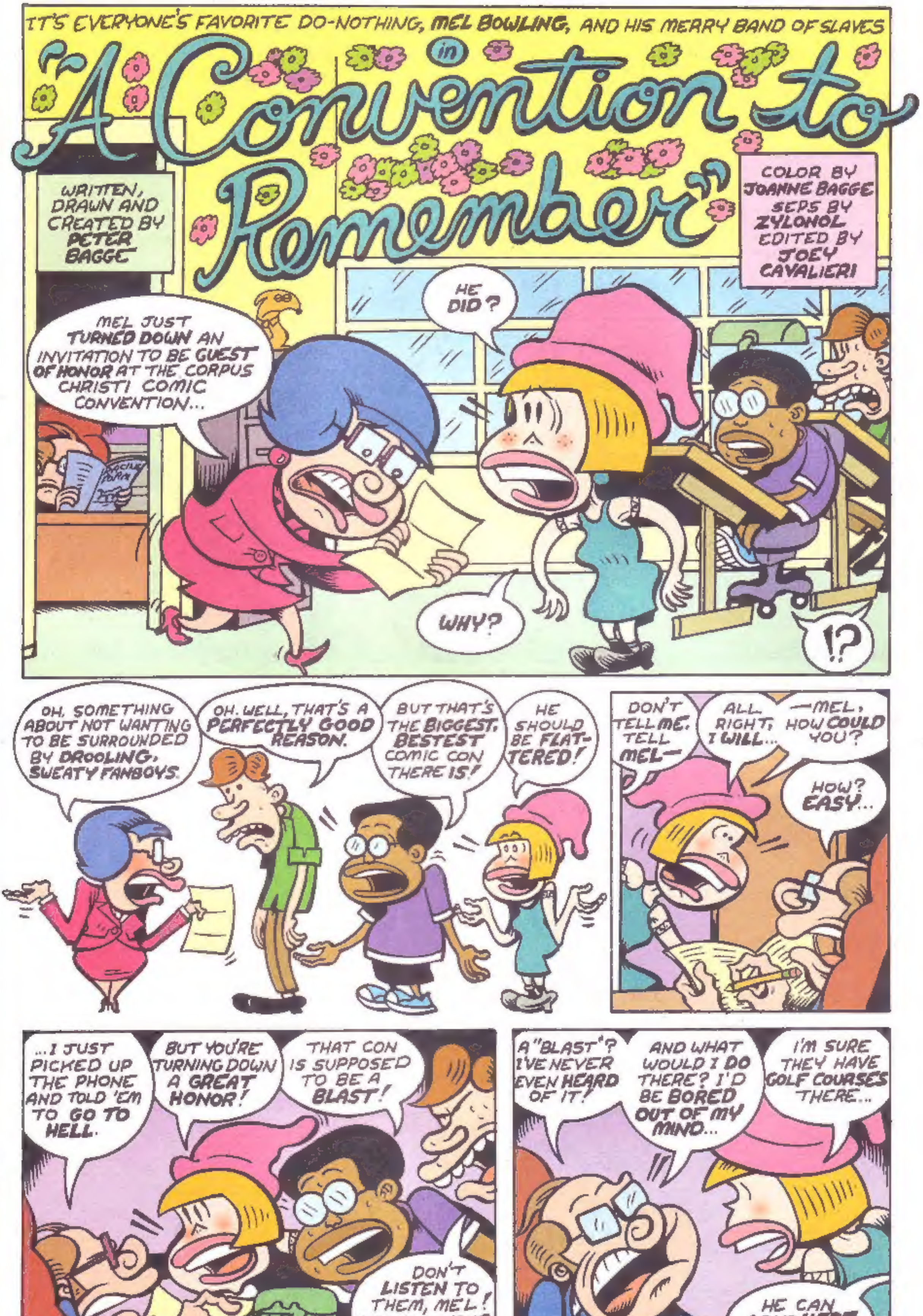
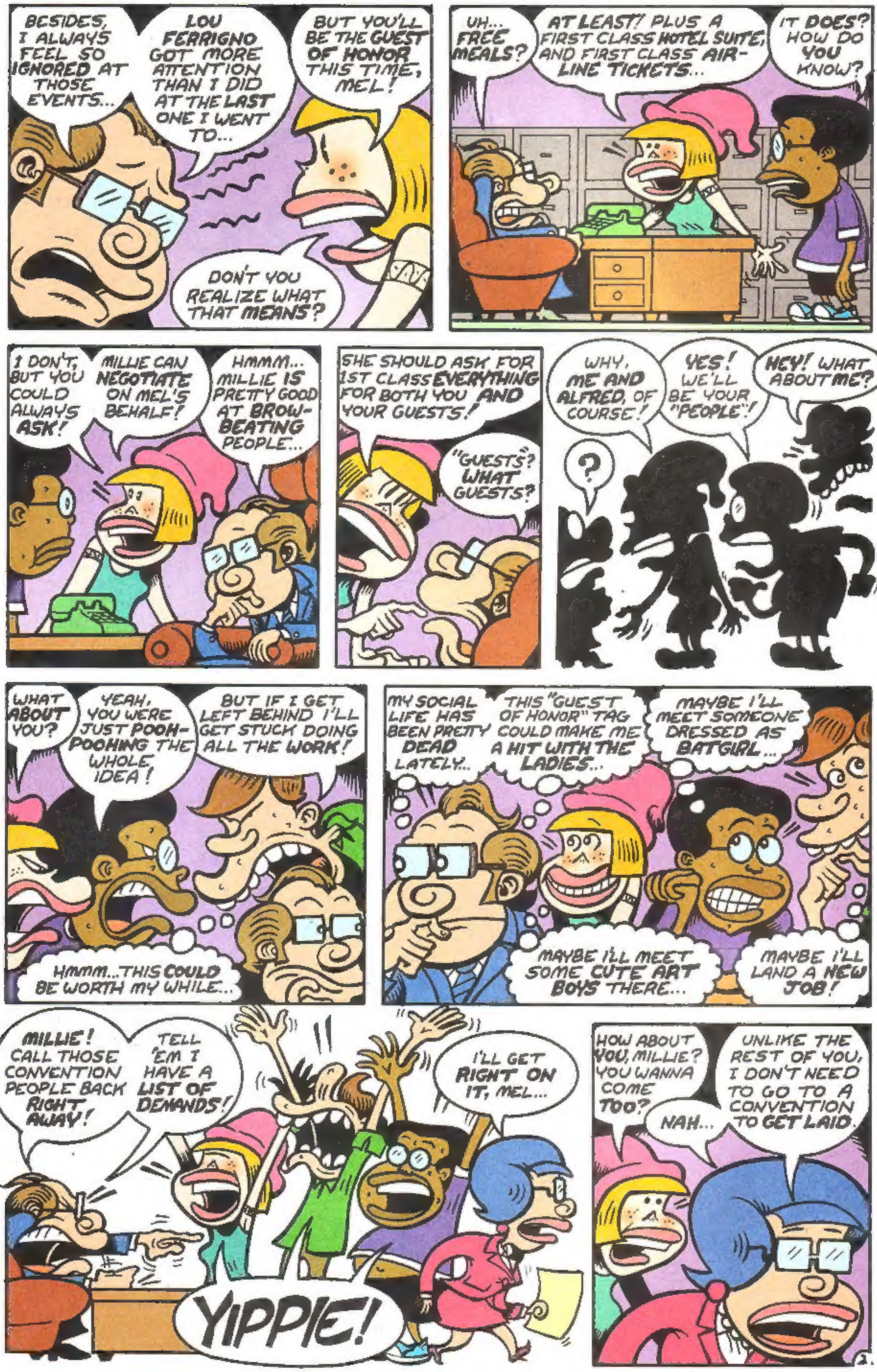
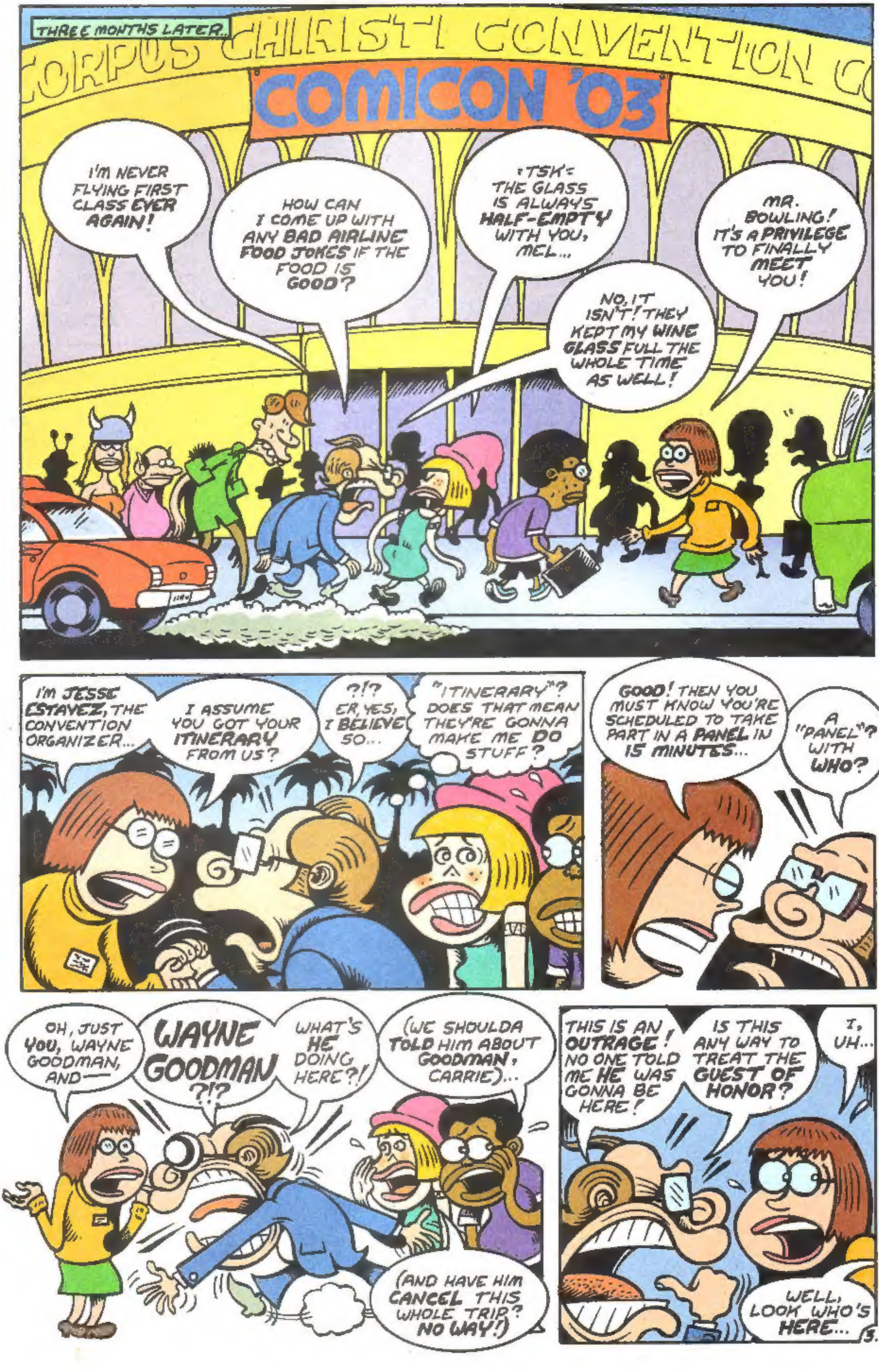
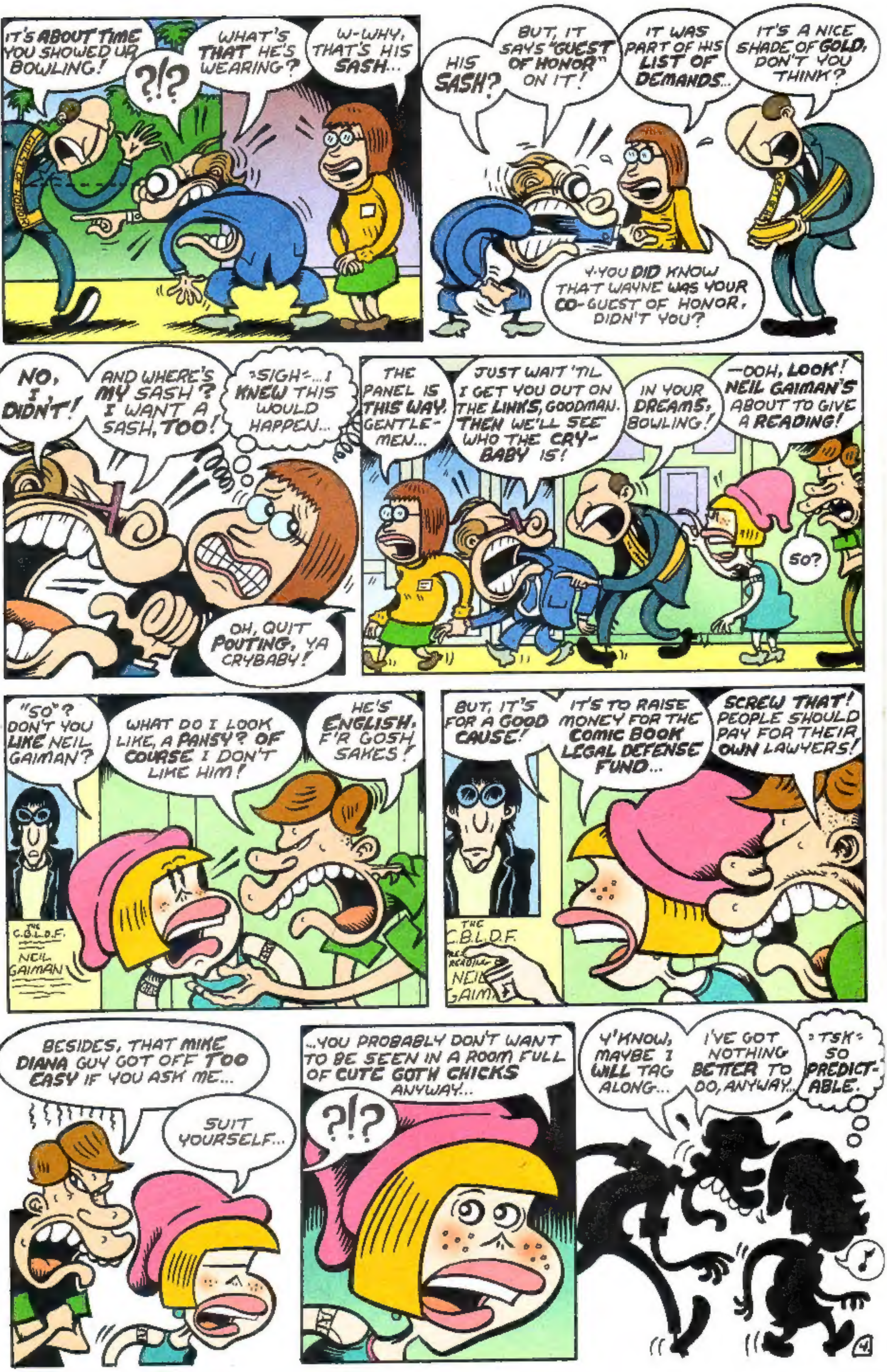


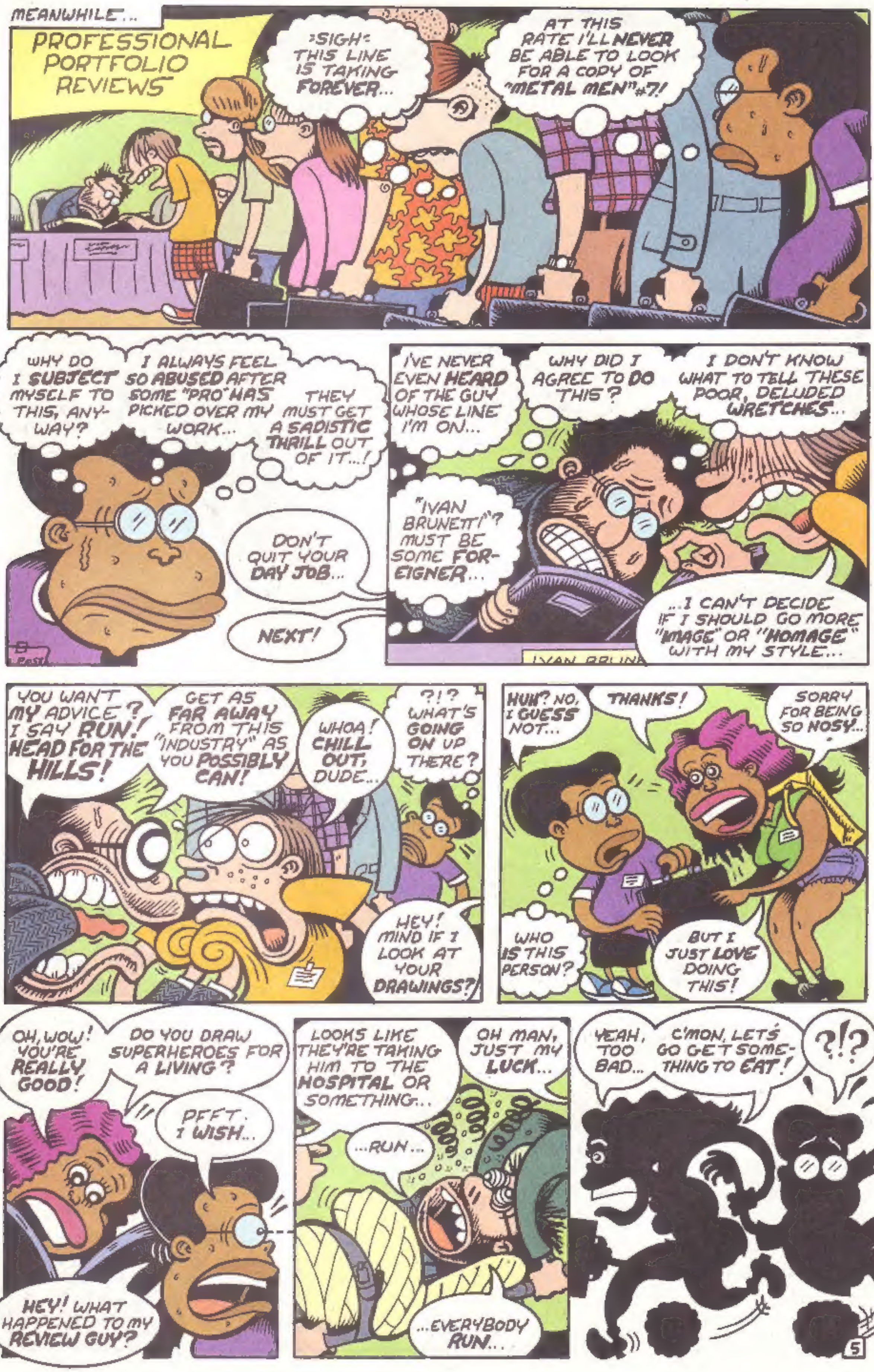
IT'S EVERYONE'S FAVORITE DO-NOTHING, MEL BOWLING, AND HIS MERRY BAND OF SLAVES in
"A Convention to Remember"
WRITTEN, DRAWN AND CREATED BY PETER BAGGE
COLOR BY JOANNE BAGGE SEPS BY ZYLONOL EDITED BY JOEY CAVALIERI
MEL JUST TURNED DOWN AN INVITATION TO BE GUEST OF HONOR AT THE CORPUS CHRISTI COMIC CONVENTION...
HE DID?
WHY?
!?
OH, SOMETHING ABOUT NOT WANTING TO BE SURROUNDED BY DROOLING, SWEATY FANBOYS.
OH. WELL, THAT'S A PERFECTLY GOOD REASON.
BUT THAT'S THE BIGGEST, BESTEST COMIC CON THERE IS!
HE SHOULD BE FLATTERED!
DON'T TELL ME. TELL MEL—
ALL RIGHT, I WILL...
—MEL, HOW COULD YOU?
HOW? EASY...
...I JUST PICKED UP THE PHONE AND TOLD 'EM TO GO TO HELL.
BUT YOU'RE TURNING DOWN A GREAT HONOR!
THAT CON IS SUPPOSED TO BE A BLAST!
DON'T LISTEN TO THEM, MEL! STICK TO YOUR GUNS!
A "BLAST"? I'VE NEVER EVEN HEARD OF IT!
AND WHAT WOULD I DO THERE? I'D BE BORED OUT OF MY MIND...
I'M SURE THEY HAVE GOLF COURSES THERE...
HE CAN GOLF HERE, CARRIE!

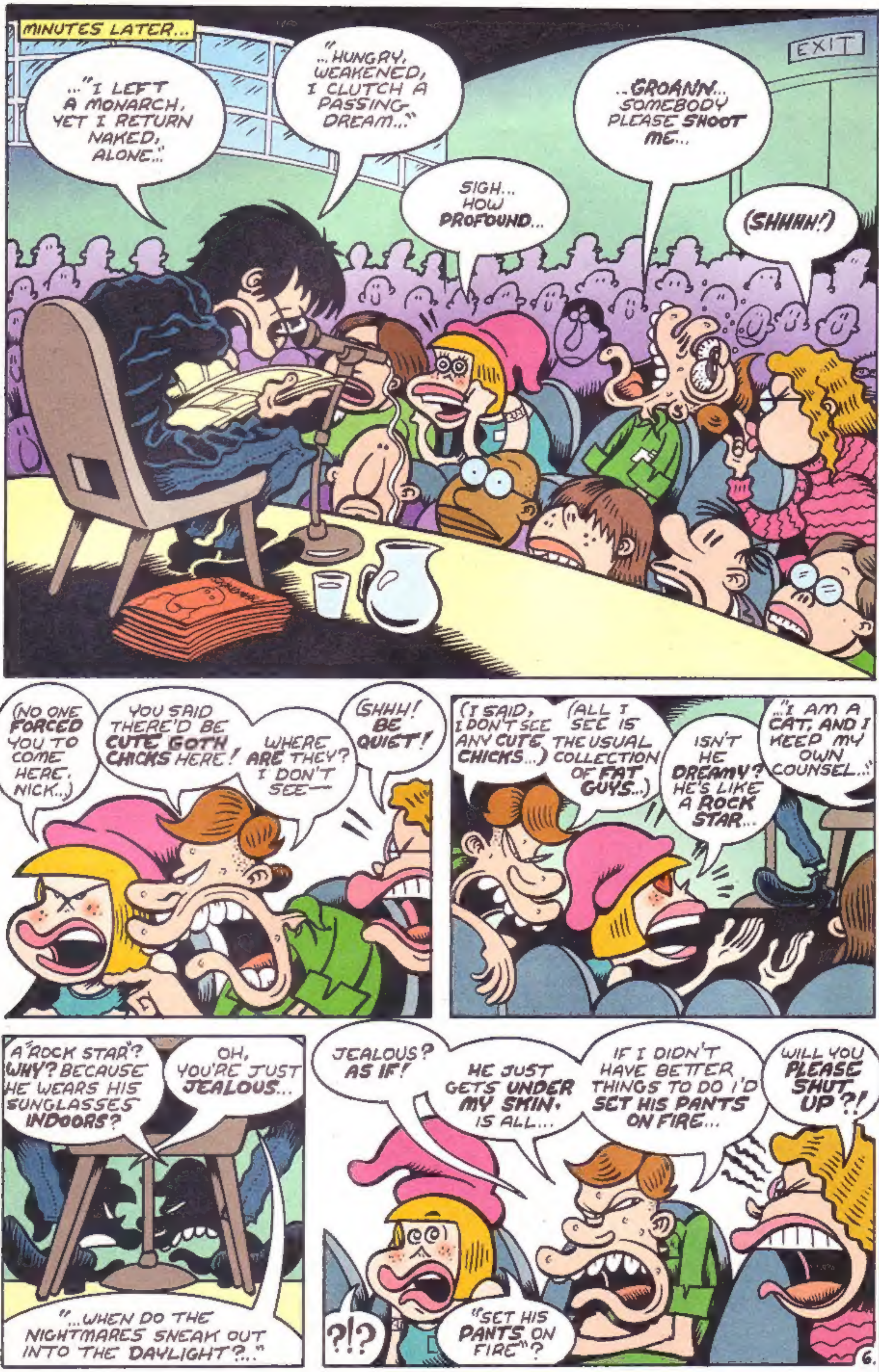


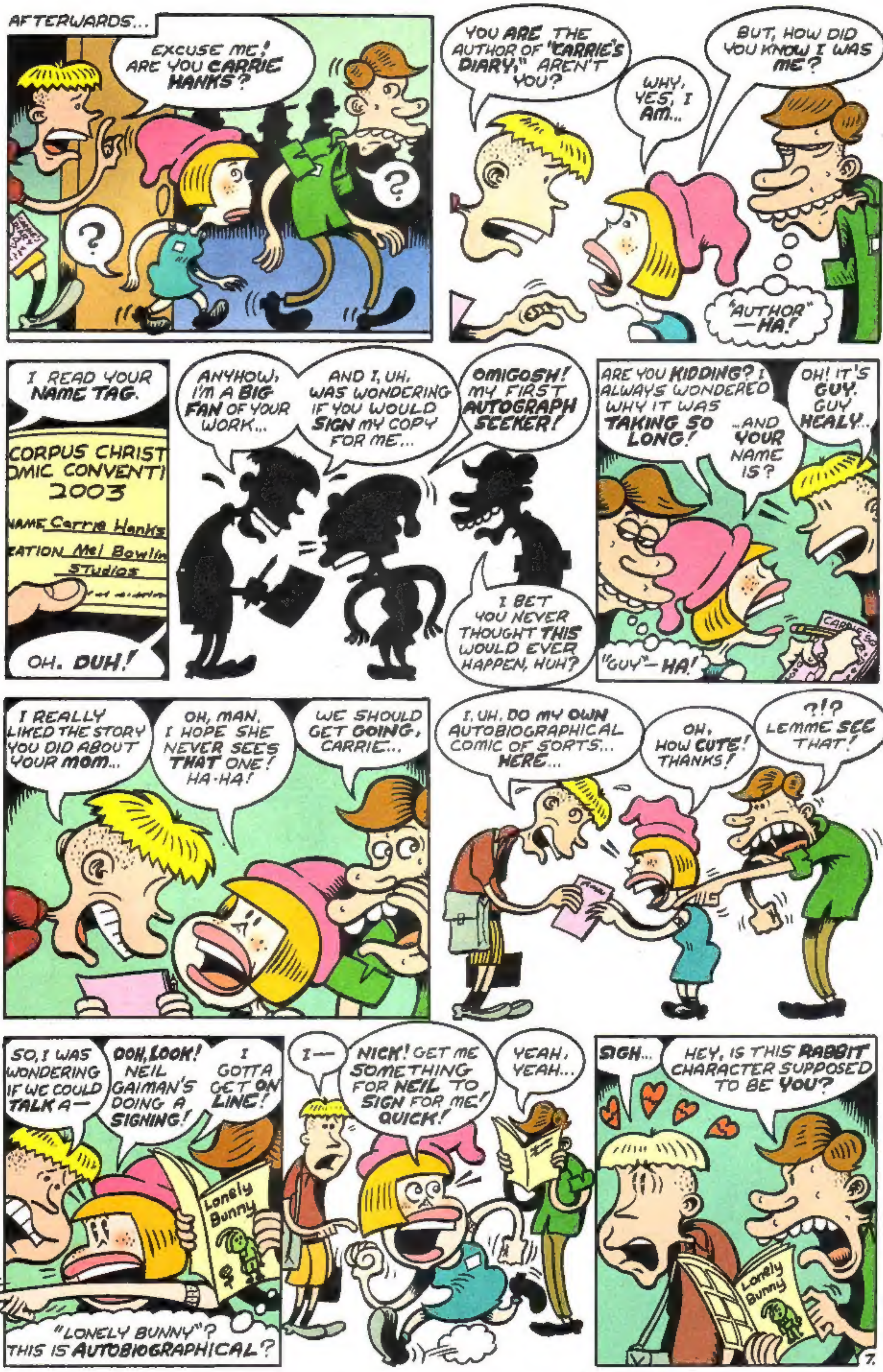
BESIDES, I ALWAYS FEEL SO IGNORED AT THOSE EVENTS...
LOU FERRIGNO GOT MORE ATTENTION THAN I DID AT THE LAST ONE I WENT TO...
BUT YOU'LL BE THE GUEST OF HONOR THIS TIME, MEL!
DON'T YOU REALIZE WHAT THAT MEANS?
UH... FREE MEALS?
AT LEAST! PLUS A FIRST CLASS HOTEL SUITE, AND FIRST CLASS AIRLINE TICKETS...
IT DOES? HOW DO YOU KNOW?
I DON'T, BUT YOU COULD ALWAYS ASK!
MILLIE CAN NEGOTIATE ON MEL'S BEHALF!
HMMM... MILLIE IS PRETTY GOOD AT BROW-BEATING PEOPLE...
SHE SHOULD ASK FOR 1ST CLASS EVERYTHING FOR BOTH YOU AND YOUR GUESTS!
"GUESTS"? WHAT GUESTS?
WHY, ME AND ALFRED, OF COURSE!
YES! WE'LL BE YOUR "PEOPLE"!
HEY! WHAT ABOUT ME?
?
WHAT ABOUT YOU?
YEAH, YOU WERE JUST POOH-POOHING THE WHOLE IDEA!
BUT IF I GET LEFT BEHIND I'LL GET STUCK DOING ALL THE WORK!
HMMM...THIS COULD BE WORTH MY WHILE...
MY SOCIAL LIFE HAS BEEN PRETTY DEAD LATELY...
THIS "GUEST OF HONOR" TAG COULD MAKE ME A HIT WITH THE LADIES...
MAYBE I'LL MEET SOMEONE DRESSED AS BATGIRL...
MAYBE I'LL MEET SOME CUTE ART BOYS THERE...
MAYBE I'LL LAND A NEW JOB!
MILLIE! CALL THOSE CONVENTION PEOPLE BACK RIGHT AWAY!
TELL 'EM I HAVE A LIST OF DEMANDS!
I'LL GET RIGHT ON IT, MEL...
YIPPIE!
HOW ABOUT YOU, MILLIE? YOU WANNA COME TOO?
NAH...
UNLIKE THE REST OF YOU, I DON'T NEED TO GO TO A CONVENTION TO GET LAID.


THREE MONTHS LATER...
CORPUS CHRISTI CONVENTION C
COMICON '03
I'M NEVER FLYING FIRST CLASS EVER AGAIN!
HOW CAN I COME UP WITH ANY BAD AIRLINE FOOD JOKES IF THE FOOD IS GOOD?
TSK THE GLASS IS ALWAYS HALF-EMPTY WITH YOU, MEL...
NO, IT ISN'T! THEY KEPT MY WINE GLASS FULL THE WHOLE TIME AS WELL!
MR. BOWLING! IT'S A PRIVILEGE TO FINALLY MEET YOU!
I'M JESSE ESTAVEZ, THE CONVENTION ORGANIZER...
I ASSUME YOU GOT YOUR ITINERARY FROM US?
?!? ER, YES, I BELIEVE SO...
"ITINERARY"? DOES THAT MEAN THEY'RE GONNA MAKE ME DO STUFF?
GOOD! THEN YOU MUST KNOW YOU'RE SCHEDULED TO TAKE PART IN A PANEL IN 15 MINUTES...
A "PANEL"? WITH WHO?
OH, JUST YOU, WAYNE GOODMAN, AND—
WAYNE GOODMAN ?!?
WHAT'S HE DOING HERE?!
(WE SHOULDA TOLD HIM ABOUT GOODMAN, CARRIE)...
(AND HAVE HIM CANCEL THIS WHOLE TRIP? NO WAY!)
THIS IS AN OUTRAGE! NO ONE TOLD ME HE WAS GONNA BE HERE!
IS THIS ANY WAY TO TREAT THE GUEST OF HONOR?
I, UH...
WELL, LOOK WHO'S HERE...


IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU SHOWED UP, BOWLING!
?!?
WHAT'S THAT HE'S WEARING?
W-WHY, THAT'S HIS SASH...
GUEST OF HONOR
HIS SASH?
BUT, IT SAYS "GUEST OF HONOR" ON IT!
IT WAS PART OF HIS LIST OF DEMANDS...
IT'S A NICE SHADE OF GOLD, DON'T YOU THINK?
Y-YOU DID KNOW THAT WAYNE WAS YOUR CO-GUEST OF HONOR, DIDN'T YOU?
NO, I DIDN'T!
AND WHERE'S MY SASH? I WANT A SASH, TOO!
SIGH... I KNEW THIS WOULD HAPPEN...
OH, QUIT POUTING, YA CRYBABY!
THE PANEL IS THIS WAY, GENTLEMEN...
JUST WAIT 'TIL I GET YOU OUT ON THE LINKS, GOODMAN. THEN WE'LL SEE WHO THE CRYBABY IS!
IN YOUR DREAMS, BOWLING!
—OOH, LOOK! NEIL GAIMAN'S ABOUT TO GIVE A READING!
SO?
"SO"? DON'T YOU LIKE NEIL GAIMAN?
WHAT DO I LOOK LIKE, A PANSY? OF COURSE I DON'T LIKE HIM!
HE'S ENGLISH, F'R GOSH SAKES!
THE C.B.L.D.F. NEIL GAIMAN
BUT, IT'S FOR A GOOD CAUSE!
IT'S TO RAISE MONEY FOR THE COMIC BOOK LEGAL DEFENSE FUND...
SCREW THAT! PEOPLE SHOULD PAY FOR THEIR OWN LAWYERS!
THE C.B.L.D.F.
BESIDES, THAT MIKE DIANA GUY GOT OFF TOO EASY IF YOU ASK ME...
SUIT YOURSELF...
...YOU PROBABLY DON'T WANT TO BE SEEN IN A ROOM FULL OF CUTE GOTH CHICKS ANYWAY...
?!?
Y'KNOW, MAYBE I WILL TAG ALONG...
I'VE GOT NOTHING BETTER TO DO, ANYWAY...
TSK SO PREDICTABLE.
♪

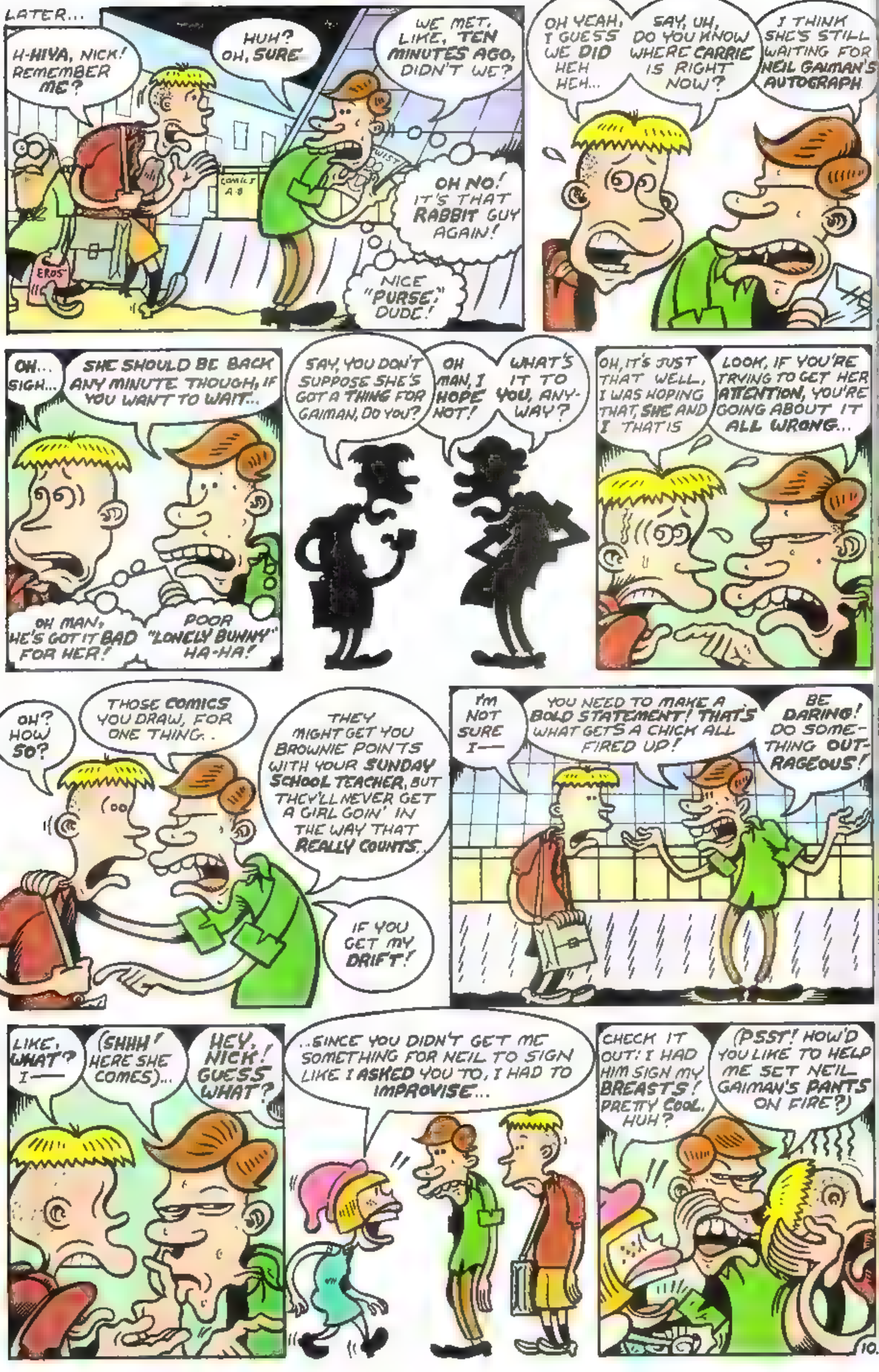

MEANWHILE...
PROFESSIONAL PORTFOLIO REVIEWS
›SIGH‹ THIS LINE IS TAKING FOREVER...
AT THIS RATE I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO LOOK FOR A COPY OF "METAL MEN" #7!
WHY DO I SUBJECT MYSELF TO THIS, ANYWAY?
I ALWAYS FEEL SO ABUSED AFTER SOME "PRO" HAS PICKED OVER MY WORK...
THEY MUST GET A SADISTIC THRILL OUT OF IT...!
DON'T QUIT YOUR DAY JOB...
NEXT!
I'VE NEVER EVEN HEARD OF THE GUY WHOSE LINE I'M ON...
WHY DID I AGREE TO DO THIS?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO TELL THESE POOR, DELUDED WRETCHES...
"IVAN BRUNETTI"? MUST BE SOME FOREIGNER...
...I CAN'T DECIDE IF I SHOULD GO MORE "IMAGE" OR "HOMAGE" WITH MY STYLE...
YOU WANT MY ADVICE? I SAY RUN! HEAD FOR THE HILLS!
GET AS FAR AWAY FROM THIS "INDUSTRY" AS YOU POSSIBLY CAN!
WHOA! CHILL OUT, DUDE...
?!? WHAT'S GOING ON UP THERE?
HEY! MIND IF I LOOK AT YOUR DRAWINGS?
HUH? NO, I GUESS NOT...
THANKS!
SORRY FOR BEING SO NOSY...
WHO IS THIS PERSON?
BUT I JUST LOVE DOING THIS!
OH, WOW! YOU'RE REALLY GOOD!
DO YOU DRAW SUPERHEROES FOR A LIVING?
PFFT. I WISH...
HEY! WHAT HAPPENED TO MY REVIEW GUY?
LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE TAKING HIM TO THE HOSPITAL OR SOMETHING...
OH MAN, JUST MY LUCK...
...RUN...
...EVERYBODY RUN...
YEAH, TOO BAD...
C'MON, LET'S GO GET SOMETHING TO EAT!
?!?
5

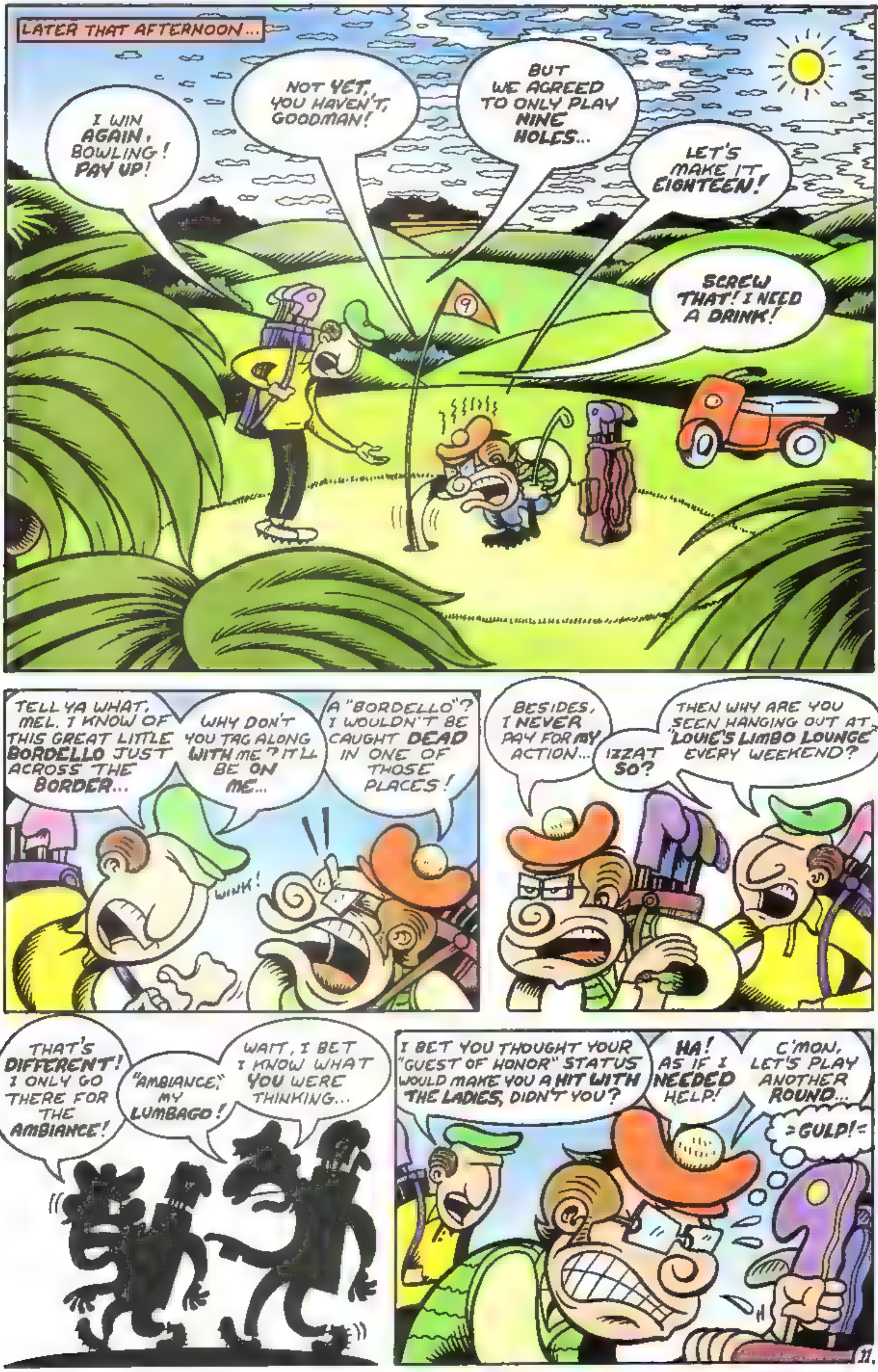

MINUTES LATER...
..."I LEFT A MONARCH, YET I RETURN NAKED, ALONE..."
"...HUNGRY, WEAKENED, I CLUTCH A PASSING DREAM..."
SIGH... HOW PROFOUND...
...GROANN... SOMEBODY PLEASE SHOOT ME...
(SHHHH!)
EXIT
(NO ONE FORCED YOU TO COME HERE, NICK...)
YOU SAID THERE'D BE CUTE GOTH CHICKS HERE!
WHERE ARE THEY? I DON'T SEE—
(SHHH! BE QUIET!
(I SAID, I DON'T SEE ANY CUTE CHICKS...)
(ALL I SEE IS THE USUAL COLLECTION OF FAT GUYS...)
ISN'T HE DREAMY? HE'S LIKE A ROCK STAR...
..."I AM A CAT, AND I KEEP MY OWN COUNSEL..."
A "ROCK STAR"? WHY? BECAUSE HE WEARS HIS SUNGLASSES INDOORS?
OH, YOU'RE JUST JEALOUS...
"...WHEN DO THE NIGHTMARES SNEAK OUT INTO THE DAYLIGHT?..."
JEALOUS? AS IF!
HE JUST GETS UNDER MY SKIN, IS ALL...
IF I DIDN'T HAVE BETTER THINGS TO DO I'D SET HIS PANTS ON FIRE...
WILL YOU PLEASE SHUT UP?!
?!?
"SET HIS PANTS ON FIRE"?


AFTERWARDS...
EXCUSE ME! ARE YOU CARRIE HANKS?
?
?
YOU ARE THE AUTHOR OF "CARRIE'S DIARY," AREN'T YOU?
WHY, YES, I AM...
BUT, HOW DID YOU KNOW I WAS ME?
"AUTHOR" —HA!
I READ YOUR NAME TAG.
CORPUS CHRIST
OMIC CONVENTI
2003
NAME Carrie Hanks
CATION Mel Bowlin Studios
OH. DUH!
ANYHOW, I'M A BIG FAN OF YOUR WORK...
AND I, UH, WAS WONDERING IF YOU WOULD SIGN MY COPY FOR ME...
OMIGOSH! MY FIRST AUTOGRAPH SEEKER!
I BET YOU NEVER THOUGHT THIS WOULD EVER HAPPEN, HUH?
ARE YOU KIDDING? I ALWAYS WONDERED WHY IT WAS TAKING SO LONG!
...AND YOUR NAME IS?
OH! IT'S GUY. GUY HEALY...
"GUY"—HA!
I REALLY LIKED THE STORY YOU DID ABOUT YOUR MOM...
OH, MAN. I HOPE SHE NEVER SEES THAT ONE! HA-HA!
WE SHOULD GET GOING, CARRIE...
I, UH, DO MY OWN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL COMIC OF SORTS... HERE...
OH, HOW CUTE! THANKS!
?!? LEMME SEE THAT!
SO, I WAS WONDERING IF WE COULD TALK A—
OOH, LOOK! NEIL GAIMAN'S DOING A SIGNING!
I GOTTA GET ON LINE!
Lonely Bunny
"LONELY BUNNY"? THIS IS AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL?
I—
NICK! GET ME SOMETHING FOR NEIL TO SIGN FOR ME! QUICK!
YEAH, YEAH...
SIGH...
HEY, IS THIS RABBIT CHARACTER SUPPOSED TO BE YOU?
Lonely Bunny

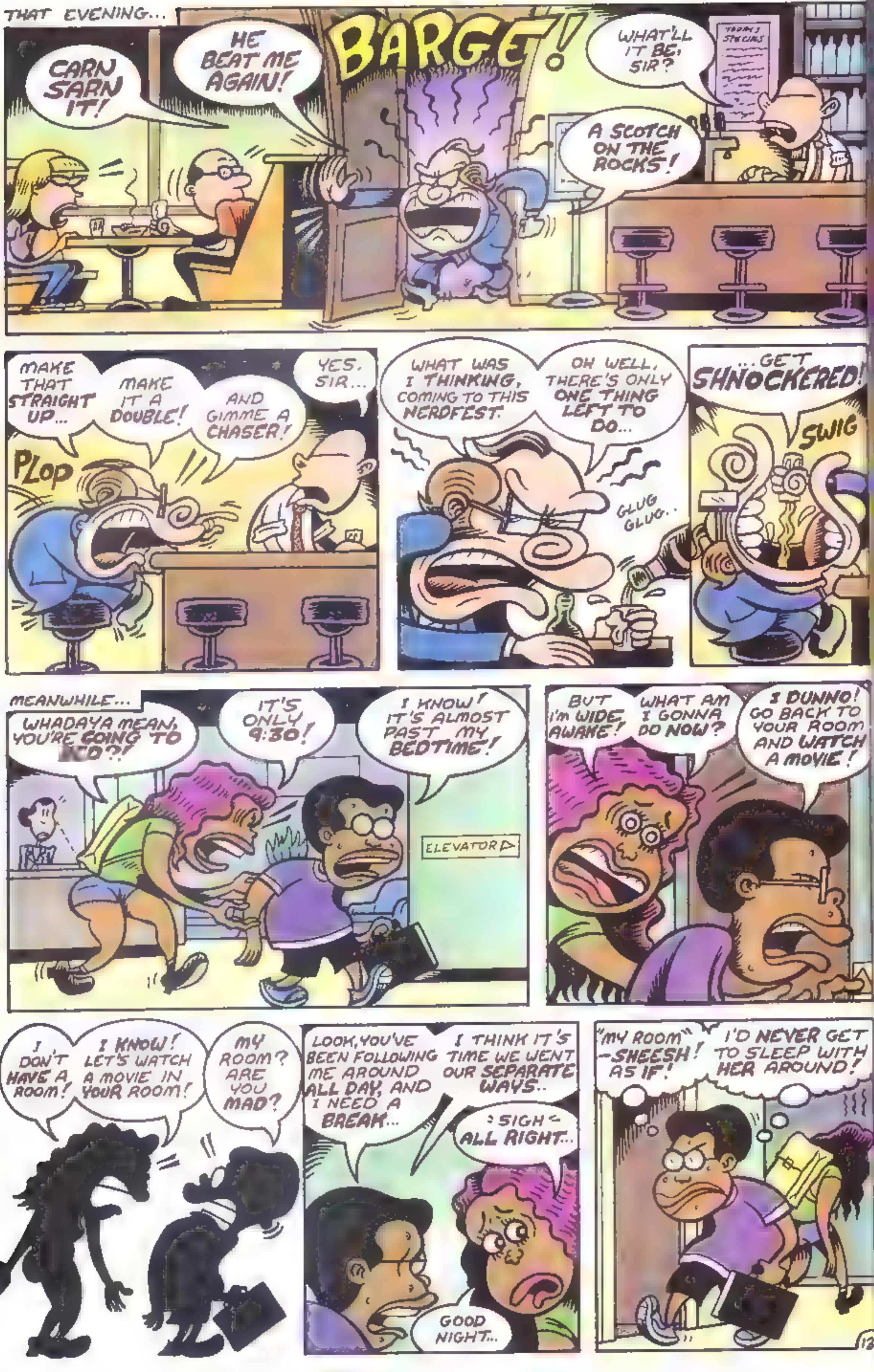
ELSEWHERE...
HA HA HA HA HA!
...SO I SAID TO MY GRANDSON, "WHAT'S A MODEM?"
HA HA! DON'T FEEL BAD, WAYNE — I CAN'T KEEP UP WITH THIS MODERN TECHNOLOGY, EITHER!
BUT THAT SEGUES NICELY INTO MY NEXT QUESTION...
"HA HA HA" SCREW YOU!
SENDALBACH
GOODMAN
MODERATOR
BOWLING
HENDERSON
"COMIC STRIP LEGENDS"
THAT GOODMAN ALWAYS TELLS THE WORST JOKES...
AND EVERYONE ENCOURAGES HIM BY LAUGHING AT THEM!
AS IF HIS EGO WASN'T BIG ENOUGH ALREADY...
MANY PEOPLE WANT TO KNOW WHAT EFFECT, IF ANY, THE INTERNET HAS HAD ON YOUR WORK...
AND WHO ARE THESE OTHER CLOWNS? I NEVER EVEN HEARD OF 'EM...
YET I HAVE TO SHARE THE STAGE WITH THEM!
...IS THE 'NET' A BOON OR A THREAT TO COMIC ART AS WE KNOW IT?
TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, THESE NO-BODIES ARE ALL "GUESTS OF HONOR" AS WELL...
THIS PLACE IS LOUSY WITH GUESTS OF HONOR!
MEL, LET'S START WITH YOU...
HUH? OH, DON'T ASK ME...
I WON'T GO NEAR A COMPUTER EVER SINCE I LEARNED I HAD TO KEEP THE MOUSE BALLS CLEAN!
HA HA HA
ZZZZZ...
GROAN...
?
8.

MEANWHILE...
HOT DOGS
TACOS PIZZA
I DON'T GET IT, ALFRED—WHY WON'T YOU DRAW ME?
I'LL EVEN POSE FOR FREE!
LOOK, IT'S NOTHING PERSONAL, MISS...
UH, WHAT DID YOU SAY YOUR NAME WAS AGAIN?
IT'S SHEILA, BUT YOU CAN CALL ME...
SHE-LA: MISTRESS OF THE DARK!
?!? WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO BE CALLED THAT?
WHY NOT? THIS IS A COMICON, RIGHT?
BESIDES, ANYTHING'S BETTER THAN JUST "SHEILA"...
PFT'T. TRY "ALFRED"...
SO, HOW SHOULD I POSE? LIKE THIS?
(WILL YOU STOP?)
YOU'RE MAKING A SCENE...
GOD, YOU'RE SO UPTIGHT...
SO WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO INSTEAD?
"INSTEAD"?
I'M GONNA LOOK FOR "METAL MEN" #7...
I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU'RE GONNA DO...
AND STOP PICKING AT MY PRETZEL!
?!? YOU'RE NOT GONNA DITCH ME, ARE YA?
SURE. WHY NOT?
BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW ANYONE ELSE HERE!
ALL THESE WHITE PEOPLE MAKE ME NERVOUS!
W-WHY'D YOU COME HERE, THEN?
I TOLD YOU —I WANNA BE AN ARTIST'S MODEL!
IT'S MY LIFELONG DREAM!
IT IS?
YES! I WANT TO BE IMMORTALIZED —STARTING WITH YOU!
SO START DRAWING, BUB!
SIGH... OKAY, OKAY...
SHOVE!
WHY DID I HAVE TO GET SADDLED WITH HER? SHE'S CRAMPING MY STYLE!
MAKE ME LOOK STATUESQUE...

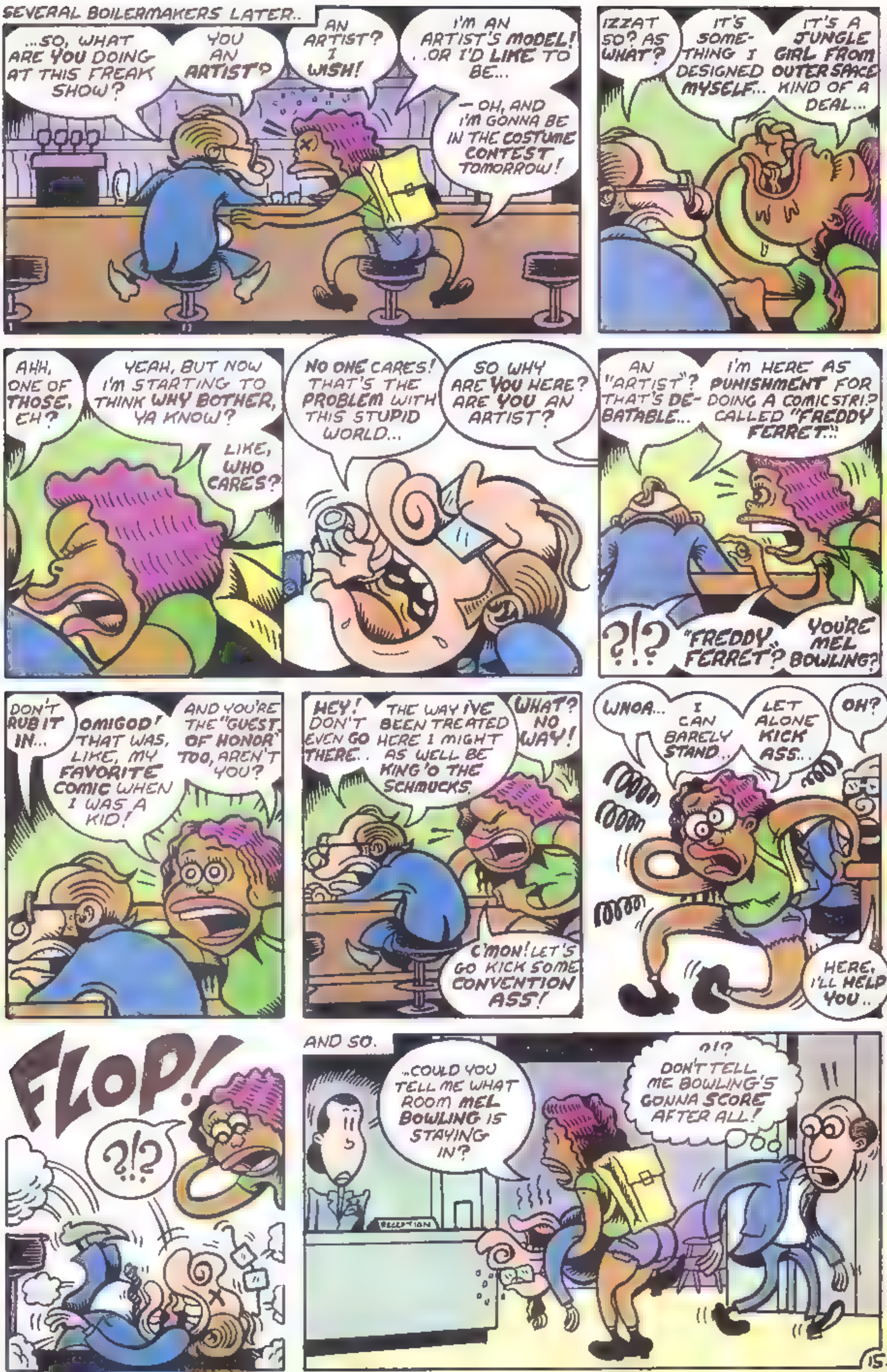

LATER...
H-HIYA, NICK! REMEMBER ME?
HUH? OH, SURE
WE MET, LIKE, TEN MINUTES AGO, DIDN'T WE?
OH NO! IT'S THAT RABBIT GUY AGAIN!
NICE "PURSE," DUDE!
COMICS A-B
EROS
OH YEAH, I GUESS WE DID HEH HEH...
SAY, UH, DO YOU KNOW WHERE CARRIE IS RIGHT NOW?
I THINK SHE'S STILL WAITING FOR NEIL GAIMAN'S AUTOGRAPH
OH... SIGH...
SHE SHOULD BE BACK ANY MINUTE THOUGH, IF YOU WANT TO WAIT...
OH MAN, HE'S GOT IT BAD FOR HER!
POOR "LONELY BUNNY" HA-HA!
SAY, YOU DON'T SUPPOSE SHE'S GOT A THING FOR GAIMAN, DO YOU?
OH MAN, I HOPE NOT!
WHAT'S IT TO YOU, ANYWAY?
OH, IT'S JUST THAT WELL, I WAS HOPING THAT, SHE AND I THAT IS
LOOK, IF YOU'RE TRYING TO GET HER ATTENTION, YOU'RE GOING ABOUT IT ALL WRONG...
OH? HOW SO?
THOSE COMICS YOU DRAW, FOR ONE THING..
THEY MIGHT GET YOU BROWNIE POINTS WITH YOUR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER, BUT THEY'LL NEVER GET A GIRL GOIN' IN THE WAY THAT REALLY COUNTS...
IF YOU GET MY DRIFT!
I'M NOT SURE I—
YOU NEED TO MAKE A BOLD STATEMENT! THAT'S WHAT GETS A CHICK ALL FIRED UP!
BE DARING! DO SOMETHING OUTRAGEOUS!
LIKE, WHAT? I—
(SHHH! HERE SHE COMES)...
HEY, NICK! GUESS WHAT?
...SINCE YOU DIDN'T GET ME SOMETHING FOR NEIL TO SIGN LIKE I ASKED YOU TO, I HAD TO IMPROVISE...
CHECK IT OUT: I HAD HIM SIGN MY BREASTS! PRETTY COOL, HUH?
(PSST! HOW'D YOU LIKE TO HELP ME SET NEIL GAIMAN'S PANTS ON FIRE?)
10.


LATER THAT AFTERNOON...
I WIN AGAIN, BOWLING! PAY UP!
NOT YET, YOU HAVEN'T, GOODMAN!
BUT WE AGREED TO ONLY PLAY NINE HOLES...
LET'S MAKE IT EIGHTEEN!
SCREW THAT! I NEED A DRINK!
9
TELL YA WHAT, MEL. I KNOW OF THIS GREAT LITTLE BORDELLO JUST ACROSS THE BORDER...
WHY DON'T YOU TAG ALONG WITH ME? IT'LL BE ON ME...
WINK!
A "BORDELLO"? I WOULDN'T BE CAUGHT DEAD IN ONE OF THOSE PLACES!
BESIDES, I NEVER PAY FOR MY ACTION...
IZZAT SO?
THEN WHY ARE YOU SEEN HANGING OUT AT "LOUIE'S LIMBO LOUNGE" EVERY WEEKEND?
THAT'S DIFFERENT! I ONLY GO THERE FOR THE AMBIANCE!
"AMBIANCE," MY LUMBAGO!
WAIT, I BET I KNOW WHAT YOU WERE THINKING...
I BET YOU THOUGHT YOUR "GUEST OF HONOR" STATUS WOULD MAKE YOU A HIT WITH THE LADIES, DIDN'T YOU?
HA! AS IF I NEEDED HELP!
C'MON, LET'S PLAY ANOTHER ROUND...
=GULP!=

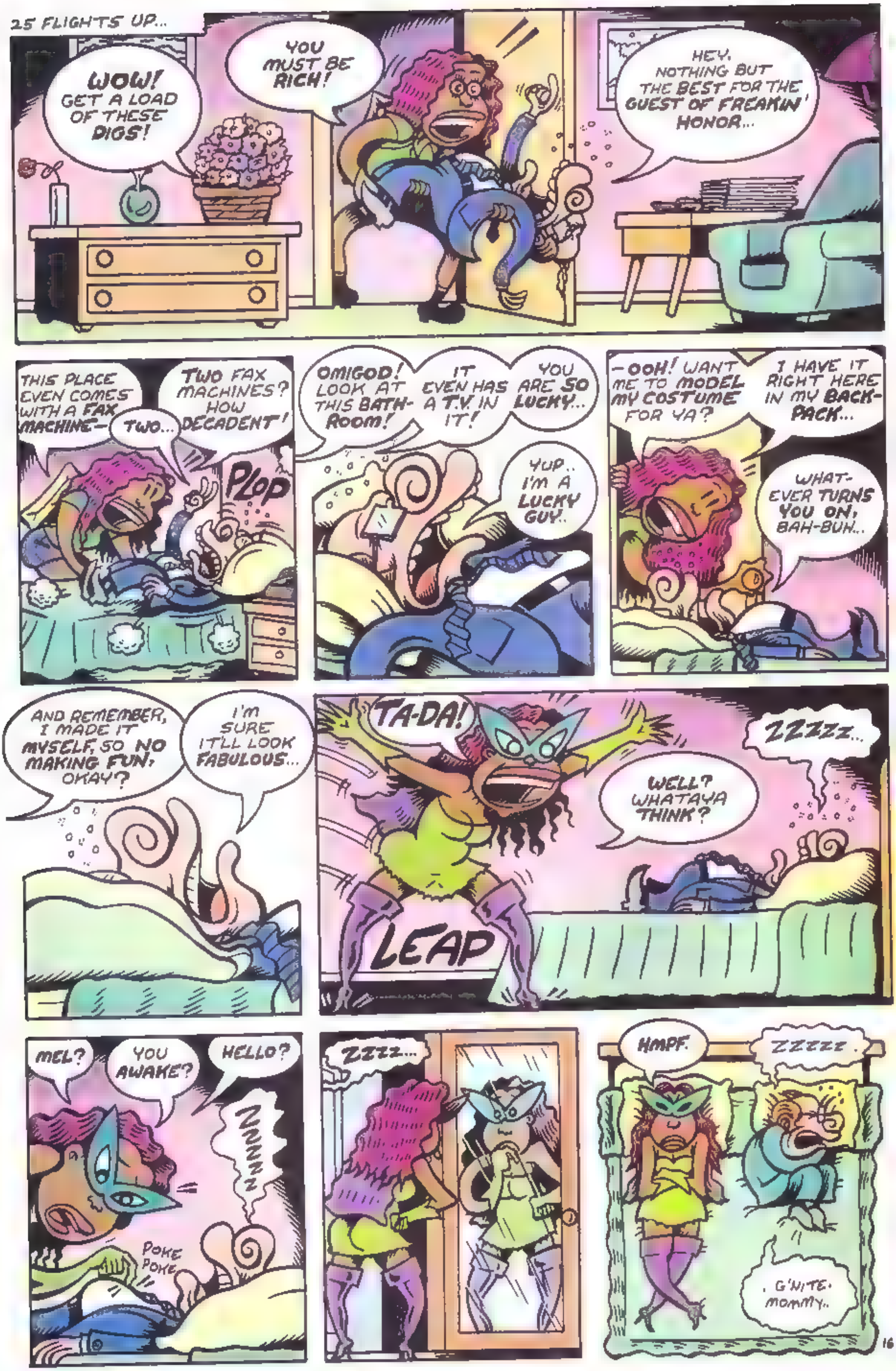
BUT THEN I SHOWED UP AND STOLE YOUR THUNDER, DIDN'T I?
ME AND ALL THE OTHER "GUESTS OF HONOR" CRAWLING ALL OVER THIS PLACE...
WHY WOULD THAT BOTHER ME? THE MORE THE MERRIER, I SAY...
OH? THEN HOW DID I WIND UP WITH TABASCO STAINS ALL OVER THE BACK OF MY SASH AT LUNCH TODAY?
SOMEONE RUINED YOUR SASH? GEE, THAT'S A TOUGH BREAK...
A "TOUGH BREAK"? YOU'RE LUCKY I DON'T HIT YOU WITH MY DRY CLEANING BILL!
HEH HEH...
... SO TELL ME, MEL, WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU'VE BEEN WITH A WOMAN?
?!?
WELL?
NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS!
HEY, I'M JUST ASKING AS A FRIEND, IS ALL...
SOME "FRIEND"...
OOF!
FWACK!
DRAT! RIGHT IN THE SAND TRAP...
SERIOUSLY, HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN, MEL? MONTHS? YEARS?
YOU'RE MUCH MORE TENSE THAN USUAL...
HAVE YOU TRIED VIAGRA?
PLOP!
I DON'T NEED NO VIAGRA!
AND I GET PLENTY! SO DON'T YOU WORRY 'BOUT ME...
OOF!
FWACK!
WOW... WILL YOU LOOK AT THAT...
IT'S HEADING RIGHT FOR THE GREEN...
TO BAD IT'S YOUR CLUB AND NOT THE BALL, THOUGH...

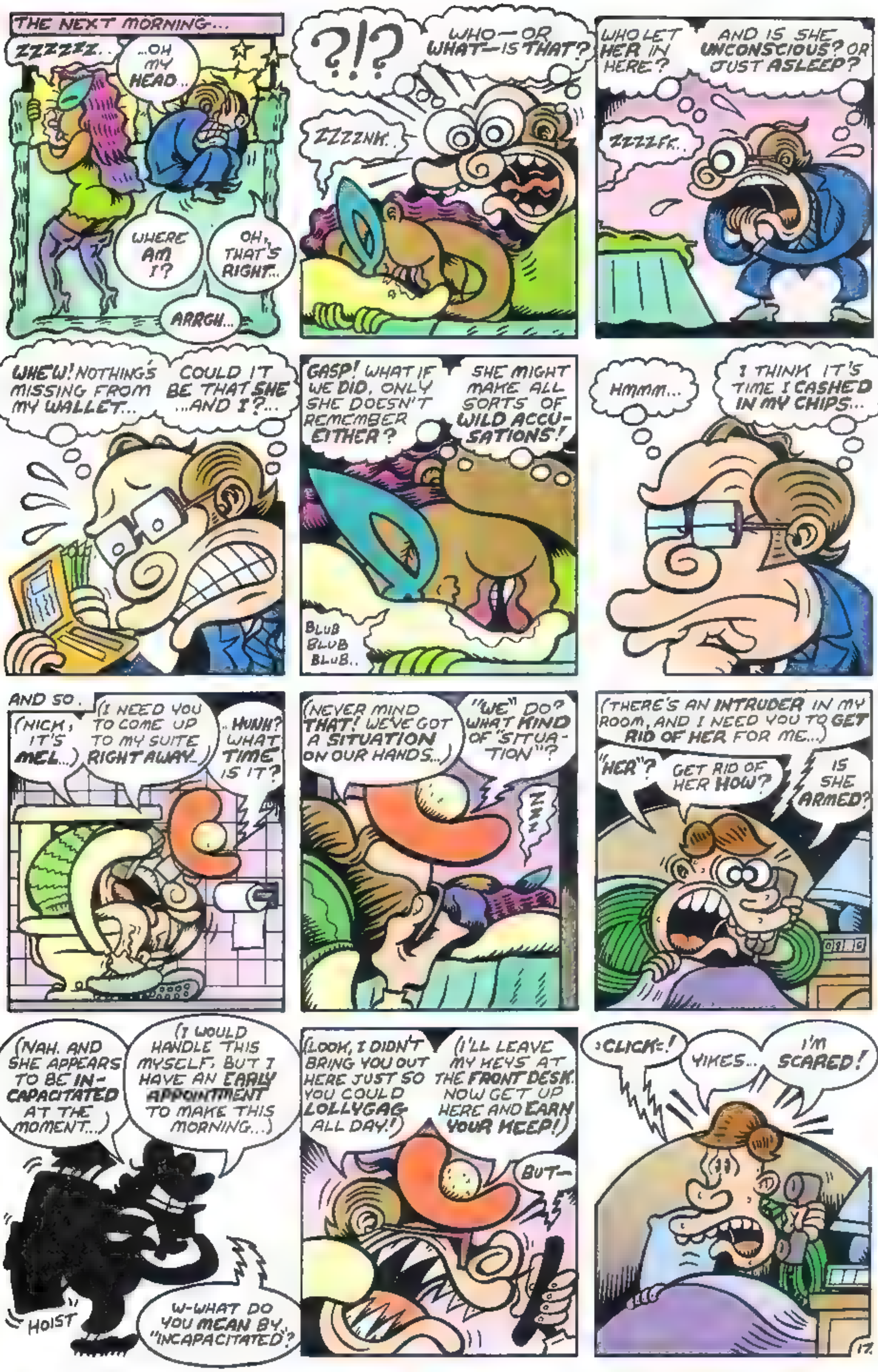

THAT EVENING...
CARN SARN IT!
HE BEAT ME AGAIN!
BARGE!
WHAT'LL IT BE, SIR?
A SCOTCH ON THE ROCKS!
MAKE THAT STRAIGHT UP...
MAKE IT A DOUBLE!
AND GIMME A CHASER!
YES, SIR...
PLOP
WHAT WAS I THINKING, COMING TO THIS NERDFEST.
OH WELL, THERE'S ONLY ONE THING LEFT TO DO...
GLUG GLUG..
...GET SHNOCKERED!
SWIG
MEANWHILE...
WHADAYA MEAN, YOU'RE GOING TO
IT'S ONLY 9:30!
I KNOW! IT'S ALMOST PAST MY BEDTIME!
ELEVATOR
BUT I'M WIDE AWAKE!
WHAT AM I GONNA DO NOW?
I DUNNO! GO BACK TO YOUR ROOM AND WATCH A MOVIE!
I DON'T HAVE A ROOM!
I KNOW! LET'S WATCH A MOVIE IN YOUR ROOM!
MY ROOM? ARE YOU MAD?
LOOK, YOU'VE BEEN FOLLOWING ME AROUND ALL DAY, AND I NEED A BREAK...
I THINK IT'S TIME WE WENT OUR SEPARATE WAYS..
SIGH ALL RIGHT...
GOOD NIGHT...
"MY ROOM" —SHEESH! AS IF!
I'D NEVER GET TO SLEEP WITH HER AROUND!

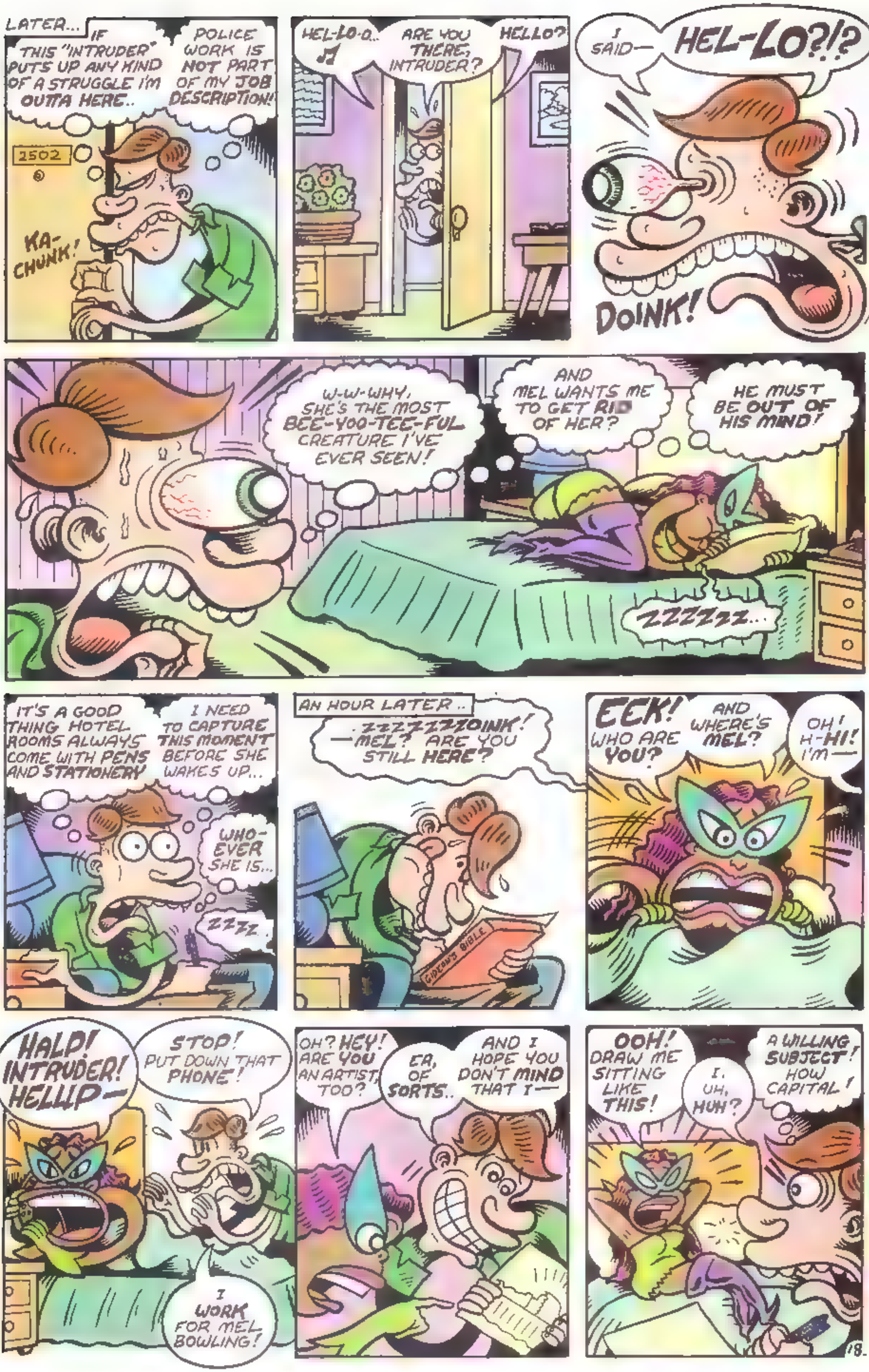
AND SO...
?!?
GOOD LORD!
@#✪!!!
...MUMBLE GRIPE...
I MUST BE DREAMING!
WHAT TH-?
STOMP!
STOMP!
THIS CONVENTION SUCKS!
I'LL DRINK TO THAT.
PLOP!
THE ONLY THING WORSE THAN BEING UNAPPRECIATED IS BEING UNAPPRECIATED BY A BUNCH OF FREAKS!
YOU TOOK THE WORDS RIGHT OUT OF MY MOUTH...
YOU SHOULD DO WHAT I'D DO AND GET DRUNK.
ALL RIGHT, I WILL...
BARKEEP! I'LL HAVE A WINE COOLER!
SPLUT!
A "WINE COOLER"? FORGET THAT!
GIVE HER WHAT I'M HAVING, BARKEEP...
COMING RIGHT UP..
BUT—
NO BUTS!
AND IT'S ON ME, SO DO WHAT I SAY!
YES, SIR...
SIP SIP SSSIP
AND NO SIPPING!
HERE, DO LIKE ME...
DOWN THE HATCH!
SWIG
OKAY, HERE GOES...
GULP!
WELL? HOW WAS THAT?
BARKEEP! GIVE ME A REFILL!
YA SEE? NOW YOU'RE LEARNIN'...
SWIG



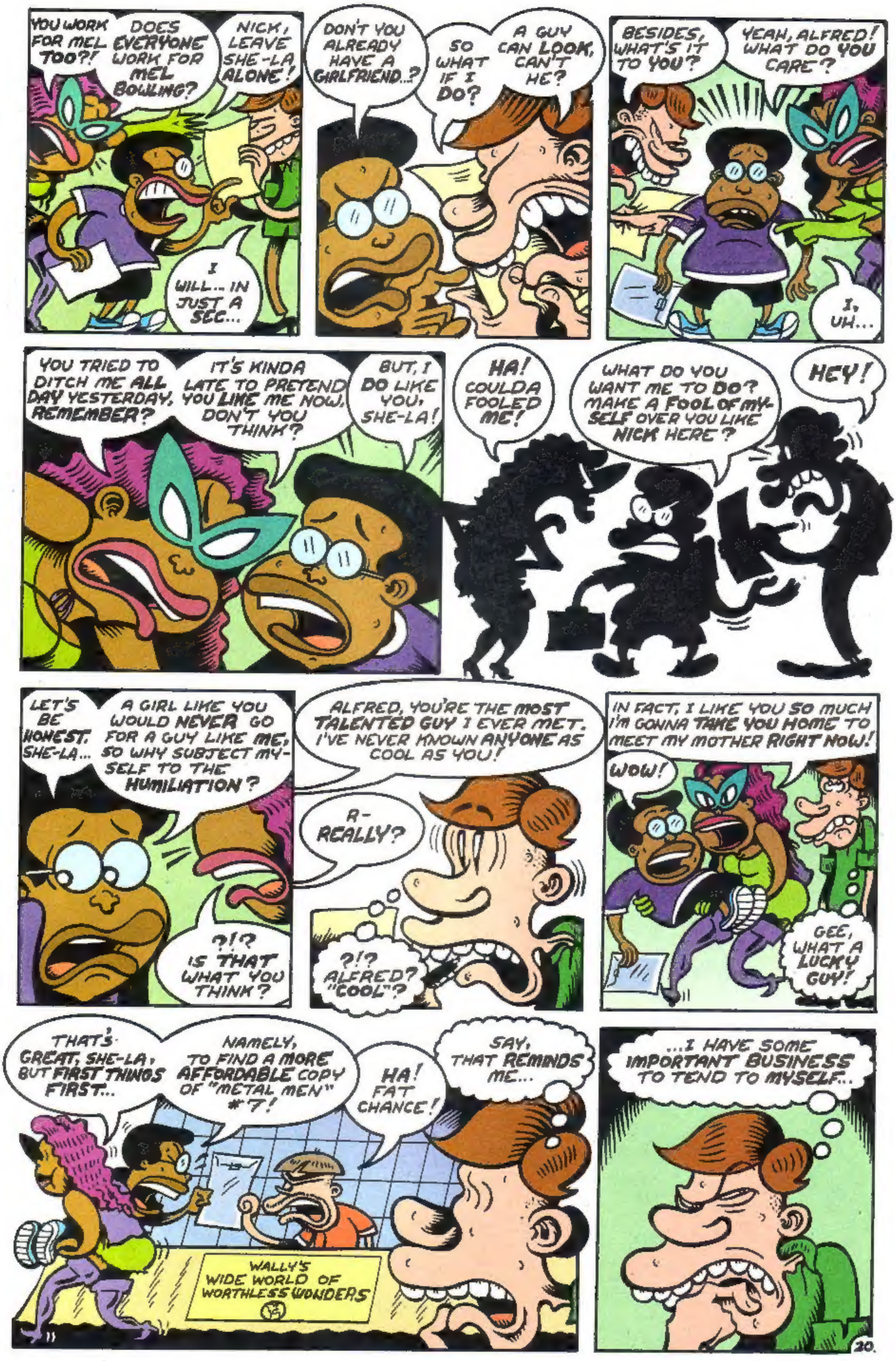
SEVERAL BOILERMAKERS LATER..
...SO, WHAT ARE YOU DOING AT THIS FREAK SHOW?
YOU AN ARTIST?
AN ARTIST? I WISH!
I'M AN ARTIST'S MODEL! ..OR I'D LIKE TO BE...
— OH, AND I'M GONNA BE IN THE COSTUME CONTEST TOMORROW!
IZZAT SO? AS WHAT?
IT'S SOME-THING I DESIGNED MYSELF...
IT'S A JUNGLE GIRL FROM OUTER SPACE KIND OF A DEAL...
AHH, ONE OF THOSE, EH?
YEAH, BUT NOW I'M STARTING TO THINK WHY BOTHER, YA KNOW?
LIKE, WHO CARES?
NO ONE CARES! THAT'S THE PROBLEM WITH THIS STUPID WORLD...
SO WHY ARE YOU HERE? ARE YOU AN ARTIST?
AN "ARTIST"? THAT'S DEBATABLE...
I'M HERE AS PUNISHMENT FOR DOING A COMICSTRIP CALLED "FREDDY FERRET."
?!?
"FREDDY FERRET"?
YOU'RE MEL BOWLING?
DON'T RUB IT IN...
OMIGOD! THAT WAS, LIKE, MY FAVORITE COMIC WHEN I WAS A KID!
AND YOU'RE THE "GUEST OF HONOR" TOO, AREN'T YOU?
HEY! DON'T EVEN GO THERE..
THE WAY I'VE BEEN TREATED HERE I MIGHT AS WELL BE KING 'O THE SCHMUCKS.
WHAT? NO WAY!
C'MON! LET'S GO KICK SOME CONVENTION ASS!
WHOA...
I CAN BARELY STAND...
LET ALONE KICK ASS..
OH?
HERE, I'LL HELP YOU..
FLOP!
?!?
AND SO.
..COULD YOU TELL ME WHAT ROOM MEL BOWLING IS STAYING IN?
?!?
DON'T TELL ME BOWLING'S GONNA SCORE AFTER ALL!
RECEPTION

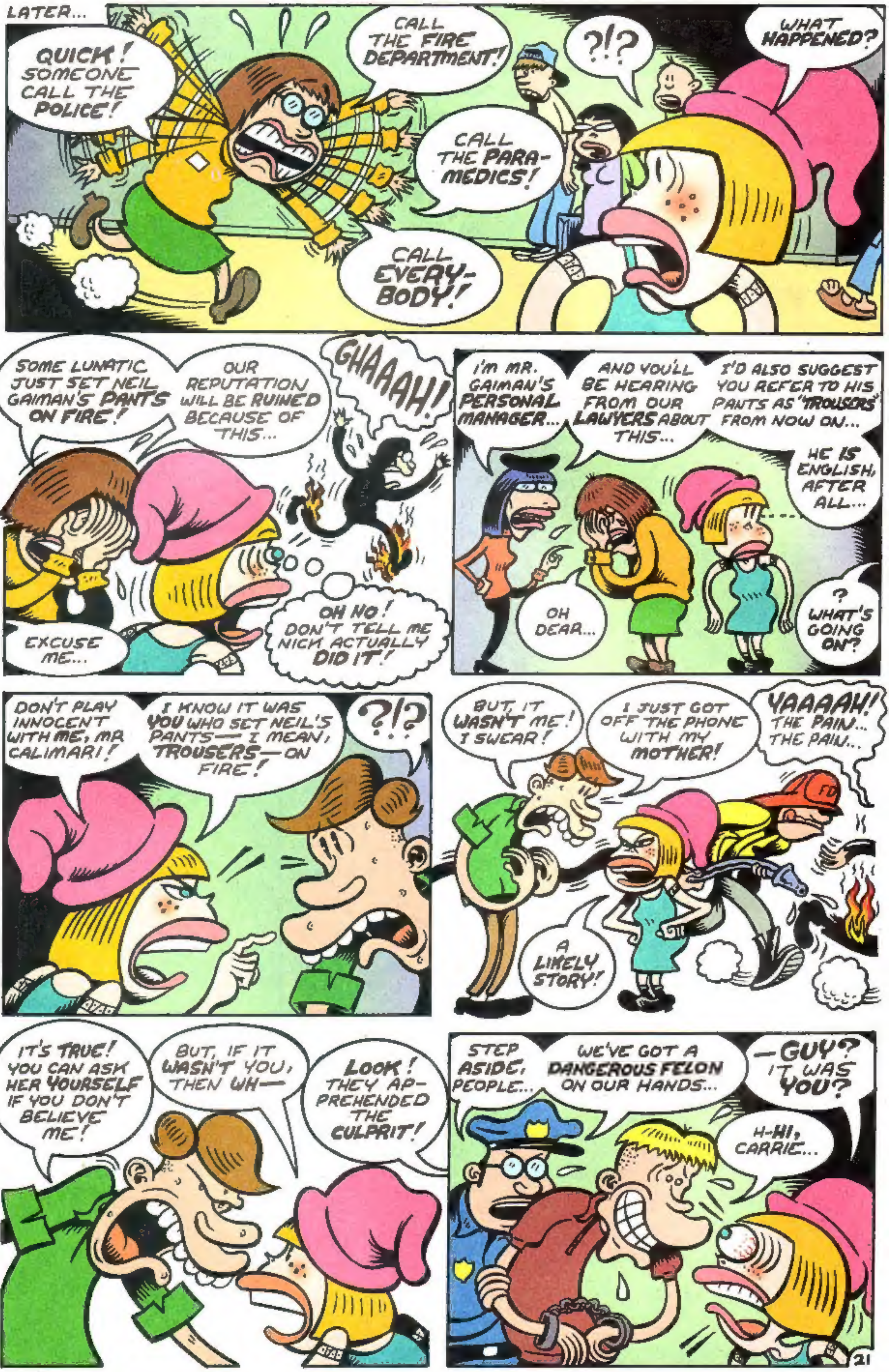

25 FLIGHTS UP...
WOW! GET A LOAD OF THESE DIGS!
YOU MUST BE RICH!
HEY, NOTHING BUT THE BEST FOR THE GUEST OF FREAKIN' HONOR...
THIS PLACE EVEN COMES WITH A FAX MACHINE—
TWO...
TWO FAX MACHINES? HOW DECADENT!
PLOP
OMIGOD! LOOK AT THIS BATH-ROOM!
IT EVEN HAS A T.V. IN IT!
YOU ARE SO LUCKY...
YUP.. I'M A LUCKY GUY..
—OOH! WANT ME TO MODEL MY COSTUME FOR YA?
I HAVE IT RIGHT HERE IN MY BACK-PACK...
WHAT-EVER TURNS YOU ON, BAH-BUH...
AND REMEMBER, I MADE IT MYSELF, SO NO MAKING FUN, OKAY?
I'M SURE IT'LL LOOK FABULOUS...
TA-DA!
LEAP
WELL? WHATAYA THINK?
ZZZZZ...
MEL?
YOU AWAKE?
HELLO?
NNNNN
POKE POKE
ZZZZ...
HMPF.
ZZZZZ.
G'NITE MOMMY..


THE NEXT MORNING...
ZZZZZZ...
...OH MY HEAD...
WHERE AM I?
OH, THAT'S RIGHT...
ARRGH...
?!?
WHO—OR WHAT—IS THAT?
ZZZZNK...
WHO LET HER IN HERE?
AND IS SHE UNCONSCIOUS? OR JUST ASLEEP?
ZZZZFF...
WHEW! NOTHING'S MISSING FROM MY WALLET...
COULD IT BE THAT SHE ...AND I?...
GASP! WHAT IF WE DID, ONLY SHE DOESN'T REMEMBER EITHER?
SHE MIGHT MAKE ALL SORTS OF WILD ACCUSATIONS!
BLUB BLUB BLUB..
HMMM...
I THINK IT'S TIME I CASHED IN MY CHIPS...
AND SO...
(NICK, IT'S MEL...)
(I NEED YOU TO COME UP TO MY SUITE RIGHT AWAY...)
...HUNH? WHAT TIME IS IT?
(NEVER MIND THAT! WE'VE GOT A SITUATION ON OUR HANDS...)
"WE" DO? WHAT KIND OF "SITUATION"?
(THERE'S AN INTRUDER IN MY ROOM, AND I NEED YOU TO GET RID OF HER FOR ME...)
"HER"?
GET RID OF HER HOW?
IS SHE ARMED?
(NAH. AND SHE APPEARS TO BE INCAPACITATED AT THE MOMENT...)
(I WOULD HANDLE THIS MYSELF, BUT I HAVE AN EARLY APPOINTMENT TO MAKE THIS MORNING...)
HOIST
W-WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "INCAPACITATED"?
(LOOK, I DIDN'T BRING YOU OUT HERE JUST SO YOU COULD LOLLYGAG ALL DAY!)
(I'LL LEAVE MY KEYS AT THE FRONT DESK. NOW GET UP HERE AND EARN YOUR KEEP!)
BUT—
CLICK!
YIKES...
I'M SCARED!


LATER...
IF THIS "INTRUDER" PUTS UP ANY KIND OF A STRUGGLE I'M OUTTA HERE..
POLICE WORK IS NOT PART OF MY JOB DESCRIPTION!
2502
KA-CHUNK!
HEL-LO-O..
ARE YOU THERE, INTRUDER?
HELLO?
I SAID—
HEL-LO?!?
DOINK!
W-W-WHY, SHE'S THE MOST BEE-YOO-TEE-FUL CREATURE I'VE EVER SEEN!
AND MEL WANTS ME TO GET RID OF HER?
HE MUST BE OUT OF HIS MIND!
ZZZZZZ...
IT'S A GOOD THING HOTEL ROOMS ALWAYS COME WITH PENS AND STATIONERY
I NEED TO CAPTURE THIS MOMENT BEFORE SHE WAKES UP...
WHO-EVER SHE IS...
ZZZZ
AN HOUR LATER..
—ZZZZZZZZOINK! —MEL? ARE YOU STILL HERE?
GIDEON'S BIBLE
EEK! WHO ARE YOU?
AND WHERE'S MEL?
OH! H-HI! I'M—
HALP! INTRUDER! HELLLP—
STOP! PUT DOWN THAT PHONE!
I WORK FOR MEL BOWLING!
OH? HEY! ARE YOU AN ARTIST, TOO?
ER, OF SORTS..
AND I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND THAT I—
OOH! DRAW ME SITTING LIKE THIS!
I, UH, HUH?
A WILLING SUBJECT! HOW CAPITAL!

SEVERAL POSES LATER...
ARE YOU SURE YOU CAN SEE ME FROM UP THERE?
YES...
NOW KEEP STILL, WHILE I—
—HEY! YOU'RE NOT DRAWING ME AT ALL!
THIS IS JUST A BUNCH OF SQUIGGLY LINES!
IT'S A, UH, CONTOUR DRAWING!
I WAS TRYING TO GET A FEEL FOR—
YOU WERE TRYING TO "GET A FEEL," ALL RIGHT!
GET OFF OF ME, YOU PERVERT!
OOF!
SHOVE
WHERE'S MEL? I NEED TO TALK TO HIM...
I DON'T KNOW WHERE HE IS!
WILL YOU PLEASE CALM DOWN?
I HOPE MEL FIRES YOU!
I FEEL SO... VIOLATED!
WAIT! I STILL WANNA DRAW YOU!
LATER, AT THE CONVENTION CENTER...
WILL YOU KEEP STILL? I'M ALMOST DONE WITH THIS SKETCH...
ALFRED! YOU GOTTA HELP ME!
?!? SHE-LA?
THAT'LL BE $75.00...TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT...
THIS WEIRDO WON'T LEAVE ME ALONE!
NICK! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
QUIET! I'M FEELING IN-SPIRED...
YOU KNOW HIM?
'ER, YEAH. WE BOTH WORK FOR THE SAME GUY...
THIS ONE'S COMING OUT GOOD...


YOU WORK FOR MEL TOO?!
DOES EVERYONE WORK FOR MEL BOWLING?
NICK, LEAVE SHE-LA ALONE!
I WILL... IN JUST A SEC...
DON'T YOU ALREADY HAVE A GIRLFRIEND..?
SO WHAT IF I DO?
A GUY CAN LOOK, CAN'T HE?
BESIDES, WHAT'S IT TO YOU?
YEAH, ALFRED! WHAT DO YOU CARE?
I, UH...
YOU TRIED TO DITCH ME ALL DAY YESTERDAY, REMEMBER?
IT'S KINDA LATE TO PRETEND YOU LIKE ME NOW, DON'T YOU THINK?
BUT, I DO LIKE YOU, SHE-LA!
HA! COULDA FOOLED ME!
WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO? MAKE A FOOL OF MY-SELF OVER YOU LIKE NICK HERE?
HEY!
LET'S BE HONEST, SHE-LA...
A GIRL LIKE YOU WOULD NEVER GO FOR A GUY LIKE ME, SO WHY SUBJECT MY-SELF TO THE HUMILIATION?
?!? IS THAT WHAT YOU THINK?
ALFRED, YOU'RE THE MOST TALENTED GUY I EVER MET. I'VE NEVER KNOWN ANYONE AS COOL AS YOU!
A-REALLY?
?!? ALFRED? "COOL"?
IN FACT, I LIKE YOU SO MUCH I'M GONNA TAKE YOU HOME TO MEET MY MOTHER RIGHT NOW!
WOW!
GEE, WHAT A LUCKY GUY!
THAT'S GREAT, SHE-LA, BUT FIRST THINGS FIRST...
NAMELY, TO FIND A MORE AFFORDABLE COPY OF "METAL MEN" #7!
HA! FAT CHANCE!
SAY, THAT REMINDS ME...
WALLY'S WIDE WORLD OF WORTHLESS WONDERS
...I HAVE SOME IMPORTANT BUSINESS TO TEND TO MYSELF...



LATER...
QUICK! SOMEONE CALL THE POLICE!
CALL THE FIRE DEPARTMENT!
CALL THE PARA-MEDICS!
CALL EVERY-BODY!
?!?
WHAT HAPPENED?
SOME LUNATIC JUST SET NEIL GAIMAN'S PANTS ON FIRE!
OUR REPUTATION WILL BE RUINED BECAUSE OF THIS...
GHAAAAH!
EXCUSE ME...
OH NO! DON'T TELL ME NICK ACTUALLY DID IT!
I'M MR. GAIMAN'S PERSONAL MANAGER...
AND YOU'LL BE HEARING FROM OUR LAWYERS ABOUT THIS...
I'D ALSO SUGGEST YOU REFER TO HIS PANTS AS "TROUSERS" FROM NOW ON...
HE IS ENGLISH, AFTER ALL...
OH DEAR...
? WHAT'S GOING ON?
DON'T PLAY INNOCENT WITH ME, MR CALIMARI!
I KNOW IT WAS YOU WHO SET NEIL'S PANTS— I MEAN, TROUSERS— ON FIRE!
?!?
BUT, IT WASN'T ME! I SWEAR!
I JUST GOT OFF THE PHONE WITH MY MOTHER!
YAAAAH! THE PAIN... THE PAIN...
A LIKELY STORY!
IT'S TRUE! YOU CAN ASK HER YOURSELF IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME!
BUT, IF IT WASN'T YOU, THEN WH—
LOOK! THEY AP-PREHENDED THE CULPRIT!
STEP ASIDE, PEOPLE...
WE'VE GOT A DANGEROUS FELON ON OUR HANDS...
—GUY? IT WAS YOU?
H-HI, CARRIE...
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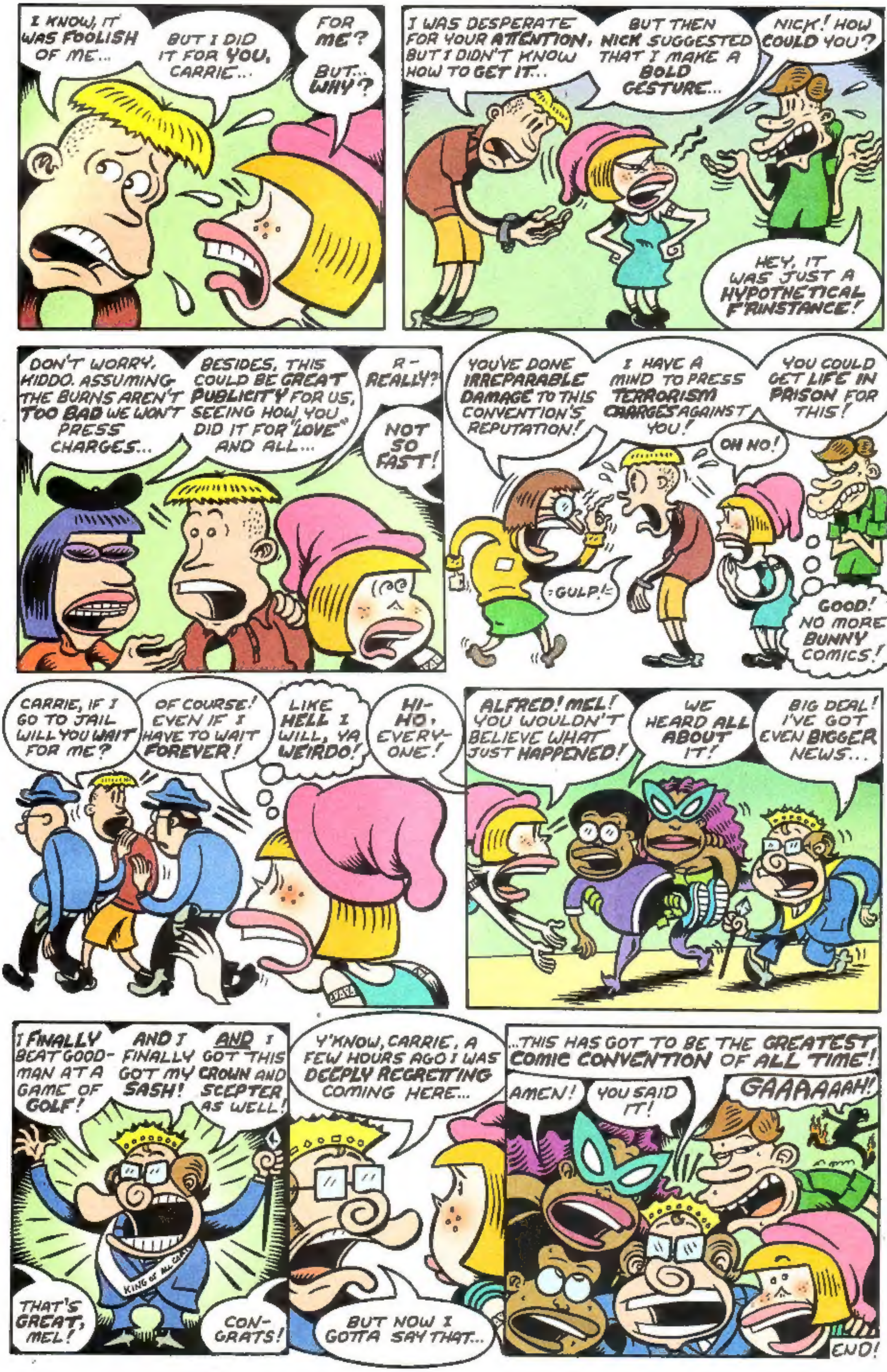

I KNOW, IT WAS FOOLISH OF ME...
BUT I DID IT FOR YOU, CARRIE...
FOR ME?
BUT... WHY?
I WAS DESPERATE FOR YOUR ATTENTION, BUT I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO GET IT...
BUT THEN NICK SUGGESTED THAT I MAKE A BOLD GESTURE...
NICK! HOW COULD YOU?
HEY, IT WAS JUST A HYPOTHETICAL F'RINSTANCE!
DON'T WORRY, KIDDO. ASSUMING THE BURNS AREN'T TOO BAD WE WON'T PRESS CHARGES...
BESIDES, THIS COULD BE GREAT PUBLICITY FOR US, SEEING HOW YOU DID IT FOR "LOVE" AND ALL...
R-REALLY?
NOT SO FAST!
YOU'VE DONE IRREPARABLE DAMAGE TO THIS CONVENTION'S REPUTATION!
I HAVE A MIND TO PRESS TERRORISM CHARGES AGAINST YOU!
YOU COULD GET LIFE IN PRISON FOR THIS!
OH NO!
GULP!
GOOD! NO MORE BUNNY COMICS!
CARRIE, IF I GO TO JAIL WILL YOU WAIT FOR ME?
OF COURSE! EVEN IF I HAVE TO WAIT FOREVER!
LIKE HELL I WILL, YA WEIRDO!
HI-HO, EVERY-ONE!
ALFRED! MEL! YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE WHAT JUST HAPPENED!
WE HEARD ALL ABOUT IT!
BIG DEAL! I'VE GOT EVEN BIGGER NEWS...
I FINALLY BEAT GOODMAN AT A GAME OF GOLF!
AND I FINALLY GOT MY SASH!
AND I GOT THIS CROWN AND SCEPTER AS WELL!
KING OF ALL CARRIE
THAT'S GREAT, MEL!
CON-GRATS!
Y'KNOW, CARRIE, A FEW HOURS AGO I WAS DEEPLY REGRETTING COMING HERE...
BUT NOW I GOTTA SAY THAT...
...THIS HAS GOT TO BE THE GREATEST COMIC CONVENTION OF ALL TIME!
AMEN!
YOU SAID IT!
GAAAAAAH!
END!